



# NORTHWEST OREGON AREA ECOLOGY GROUP NEWSLETTER

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Kim Mellen  
Robin Dobson  
Hugh Snook  
Barbara Raible  
Nancy Wogen  
Charley Thompson  
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The Northwest Area Ecology Group is an association of multi-talented ecologists from the Siuslaw and Willamette Forests, the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, and the Eugene and Salem Bureau of Land Management Districts. The group focuses on gathering information and formulating solutions to complex ecological questions in the Region. Through their own efforts, and affiliation with ecologists with Oregon State University, University of Oregon, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and private consultants, they have developed products most resource managers use every day.

This first newsletter highlights the persons involved with this program. Who are they? What are their specific skills? What can they do for you?





Cindy McCain,  
Ecologist,  
Siuslaw and Willamette  
National Forest

EDUCATION: B.A. History, University of California at Santa Cruz; M.S. Forest Ecology, Oregon State University.

AREA OF EXPERTISE: Riparian and upland plant communities, potential natural vegetation modeling, and ecological data management.

RECENT PROJECTS: Revision of the Plant Association Guides for the Northwest Oregon Coast and Western Cascades, riparian vegetation sampling for future riparian guide, and Plant Association Group (PAG) model for Northwest Oregon.

THE BIGGEST ECOLOGICAL QUESTION ON HER MIND THESE DAYS: How do we think about “restoration” in the face of climate change and the explosion of non-native species?

AN ECOLOGIST THAT MOST INFLUENCES HER WORK: Jan Henderson (FS Ecologist for NW Washington). His potential natural vegetation model has influenced the way I see our landscape.

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Jane Kertis,  
Ecologist,  
Siuslaw and Willamette  
National Forest

EDUCATION: B.S. Botany, Oregon State University; M.S. Forest Ecology, University of Washington.

AREA OF EXPERTISE: Disturbance ecology (especially fire), stand development, and oak ecology.

RECENT PROJECTS: Fire regimes and current condition class of lands in northwest Oregon; stand development pathways in northwest Oregon; Fire effects at Warner Creek and Charlton fire (Waldo lake); Fire history of Willamette Valley and foothills (beginning '02); Oak ecosystem characterization and restoration.

THE BIGGEST ECOLOGICAL QUESTION ON HER MIND THESE DAYS: How do we use what we know about how ecosystems have developed in the past toward appropriate management in the present and the future?

AN ECOLOGIST THAT MOST INFLUENCES HER WORK: All the great field ecologists I have the pleasure of working with in northwest Oregon.

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**Kim Mellen,  
Wildlife Ecologist,  
Mt. Hood National Forest**

**EDUCATION:** B.S. Wildlife Sciences, Oregon State University; M.S. Wildlife Sciences, Oregon State University.

**AREA OF EXPERTISE:** Dead wood as habitat components, Wildlife Habitat Relationships and Modeling, and Landscape ecology.

**RECENT PROJECTS:** Habitat modeling such as Dead Wood – DecAID – Decayed wood advisory model (in progress); CWDM – Coarse wood dynamics model; Survey and manage habitat modeling for the Malone jumping slug, Puget Oregonian Red tree vole, and the Lynx.

**THE BIGGEST ECOLOGICAL QUESTION ON HER MIND THESE DAYS:** The role of fire in the dynamics and creation of dead wood.

**AN ECOLOGIST THAT MOST INFLUENCES HER WORK:** Nancy Diaz, USFS Ecologist.

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**Robin Dobson,  
Botanist/Ecologist,  
Columbia River Gorge  
National Scenic Area,  
Hood River, OR**

**EDUCATION:** M.S. and Ph.D in Plant Pathology.

**AREA OF EXPERTISE:** Ecological restoration in flood plains and fire prone oak communities.

**RECENT PROJECTS:** Sandy River Delta restoration; Oak woodland enhancement thinning/fuel reduction; restoration of native grasslands after a wildfire in east Gorge; and a county rock pit reclamation/restoration to native plant communities east of Hood River.

**THE BIGGEST ECOLOGICAL QUESTION ON HIS MIND THESE DAYS:** Why are agencies/governments and interest groups having such a difficult time accepting and working towards re-establishing the ecological processes which define our environment; even if it means mimicking those processes when the actual processes, such as fire, are not acceptable? Species management is not a realistic goal and, therefore, re-establishing the ecological processes is critical in meeting our commitments.

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Hugh Snook,  
Ecologist, Marys Peak  
Resource Area,  
Salem District BLM

EDUCATION: B.S. Forest Management, Minor in Forest Ecology, OSU; and Natural Resource Institute, UW, WSU, OSU.

AREA OF EXPERTISE: Fire Ecology, Silviculture, Lichen and Bryophyte neophyte.

RECENT PROJECTS: Western Oregon Density Management Studies; BLM Landscape Management System (LMS) demo with UW; Young stand thinning — wide and variable density; Oregon white oak inventory and sampling; Forest growth modeling.

THE BIGGEST ECOLOGICAL QUESTION ON HIS MIND THESE DAYS: Deciding what *should* be the biggest ecological question on my mind.

AN ECOLOGIST THAT MOST INFLUENCES HIS WORK: Aldo Leopold for his poetic, inspiring philosophy and Hamish Kimmins who wrote the book on forest ecology.

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Barbara Raible,  
Cascades Resource Area  
Ecologist,  
Salem District BLM

EDUCATION: B.S. University of Montana, Graduate Credits at OSU.

AREA OF EXPERTISE: Knowing that I am not an expert and that there is still a lot to learn. My area of interest is landscape-level projects.

RECENT PROJECTS: Sandy River Land Acquisition and Restoration; Upper Swan Valley Assessment (with a community group), Montana (ongoing).

THE BIGGEST ECOLOGICAL QUESTION ON HER MIND THESE DAYS: How does sustainability fit with ecosystem management? We should really say we can manage elements of the ecosystem, but do we ever know enough to sustain all the parts?

AN ECOLOGIST THAT MOST INFLUENCES HER WORK: I think that the people I have met who live and work in the forest and have on-the-ground experience and knowledge influence my thinking more than anyone single person ever could.

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**Nancy Wogen,  
Plant Ecologist and  
Senior Staff Botanist,  
Eugene District BLM**

**EDUCATION:** B.S. Wildlife Management, Oregon State University.

**AREA OF EXPERTISE:** Native Seeds and Invasive Weed Control.

**RECENT PROJECTS:** Co-lead on the development of the Middle McKenzie Adaptive Management Area Landscape Plan; assisted in coordinating a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant focusing on Oak and Pine Management within the District; Program lead for Survey and Manage Program, botany program, and invasive plant species program.

**THE BIGGEST ECOLOGICAL QUESTION ON HER MIND THESE DAYS:** How can we re-frame and re-define the concept of “sustainability” to be useful in accurately monitoring and maintaining complex systems in a meaningful, holistic, and timely way?

**AN ECOLOGIST THAT MOST INFLUENCES HER WORK:** Jane Kertis and Cindy McCain of the USFS. I have been working with them for several years. They bring real enthusiasm, professionalism, and dedication to their work. They are excellent role models for anyone in the ecology profession.

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**Charley Thompson,  
Forest Ecologist,  
Salem BLM District**

**EDUCATION:** B.S. Forest Resources, University of Minnesota.

**AREA OF EXPERTISE:** Forest Ecology and Silviculture.

**RECENT PROJECTS:** BLM’s Density Management Studies.

**THE BIGGEST ECOLOGICAL QUESTION ON HIS MIND THESE DAYS:** What is the function and dynamics of canopy gaps in a conifer-dominated forest?

**AN ECOLOGIST THAT MOST INFLUENCES HIS WORK:** Dr. John Tappeiner, OSU.

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**Richard Hardt,  
Forest Ecologist,  
Eugene BLM District**

**EDUCATION:** B.A. Johns Hopkins University, MLA Harvard University, PhD University of Georgia.

**AREA OF EXPERTISE:** Forest Ecology.

**RECENT PROJECTS:** Late Successional Reserve #267 Restoration Team; Oak restoration demonstration project.

**THE BIGGEST ECOLOGICAL QUESTION ON HIS MIND THESE DAYS:** How can silvicultural treatments influence the development of forest structure?

**AN ECOLOGIST THAT MOST INFLUENCES HIS WORK:** Dr. John Tappeiner, OSU.

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**Mark Stephen,  
Forest Ecologist,  
Eugene BLM District**

**EDUCATION:** B.S. Forestry.

**AREA OF EXPERTISE:** Silviculture and natural resource planning.

**RECENT PROJECTS:** Dam maintenance to stabilize potentially liquifiable soils in the Lake Creek Dam; Late Successional Reserve restoration.

**THE BIGGEST ECOLOGICAL QUESTION ON HIS MIND THESE DAYS:** What is the best young stand management for the development of old growth habitat?

**AN ECOLOGIST THAT MOST INFLUENCES HIS WORK:** Dr. John Tappeiner, OSU and Chad Oliver, Univ. of Washington.

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**Cheryl Ann Friesen,  
Wildlife Biologist  
and Resources Staff,  
McKenzie Ranger District,  
Willamette National  
Forest**

**EDUCATION:** B.S. Zoology, California State Polytechnic University, M.S. Wildlife Management, Oregon State University.

**AREA OF EXPERTISE:** Forest and landscape ecology, managing landscapes for wildlife.

**RECENT PROJECTS:** Conservation Plan for the Great Gray Owl, Landscape Strategy for the Mink Lake Basin and it's Spotted Frogs.

**THE BIGGEST ECOLOGICAL QUESTION ON HER MIND THESE DAYS:** How do we successfully manage our natural resources in an environment with such a high degree of uncertainty?

**AN ECOLOGIST THAT MOST INFLUENCES HER WORK:** Nancy Diaz, USFS Ecologist and David Mech, University of MN.

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The NW Area Ecology Group relies on a variety of professionals throughout the area to support their activities. The following ecologists and biologists also contribute to the program.

**Pat Ormsbee, Wildlife Biologist, Willamette National Forest.**  
Specialties: Bats.

**Matt Hunter, Ecologist, Private Consultant.**  
Specialties: Amphibians and birds.

**Bruce McCune, Botanist, Oregon State University.**  
Specialty: Lichens.

**Linda Geiser, Lichenologist and Air Quality Specialist, Siuslaw National Forest.**  
Specialty: Lichens.

**Tom O'Neil, Ecologist, Northwest Habitat Institute.**  
Specialties: Oak restoration, biodiversity data management.

**Ed Arnett, Ecologist, Oregon State University.**  
Specialty: Bats.

**Fred Hall, Plant Ecologist.**  
Specialty: Special Habitats.

**Susan Haig, Ecologist, Oregon State University.**  
Specialty: Forest birds.

**Walt Kastner, Silviculturist, Siuslaw National Forest.**  
Specialty: Tree diseases.

**Ralph Garano, Aquatic Ecologist, Earth Designs Consultants.**  
Specialties: Wetlands and Watershed Ecology; aquatic entomology, limnology.

**Dave DeMoss, Ecologist, Eugene BLM.**  
Specialty: Forest Ecology.

**John Cissel, Research Coordinator, Willamette National Forest.**  
Specialty: Landscape modeling.

